

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C—Advent 2
Lesson Plans for Older Children
RCL Old Testament Readings—Track One

Scripture: Baruch 5:1-9

Background: This is the second Sunday of Advent, the four weeks that prepare us for Christmas. Advent means “coming” and the One who is coming is the messiah, Jesus. We remember and celebrate Jesus’ birth and we make ourselves ready for the time that Jesus will come again, when God will make all things new. The stories we hear in this season are from the prophets, who bring us messages of great hope and deep joy as we wait and watch and wonder.

A Notation for This Week’s Reading: God will restore Jerusalem and lead God’s people home.

Theme: God’s Goodness Glows

Before Class: You will need Sharpies in metallic gold or silver and many jewel toned colors for the group and a mason jar and a votive candle for each child.

Beginning: Prepare your gathering/prayer space with a cloth of blue or purple, whichever color your church uses in Advent. For the four weeks of Advent and two weeks of Christmas, you will need an Advent wreath and a Christ Candle, or four votive candles and a pillar candle, matches and a candlesnuffer. A chime is helpful to mark transitions but not necessary.

Opening Prayer: Invite a child to read the opening prayer.

Holy God, let the light of this Advent candle remind us that Jesus is the light of the world. May this light glow in us, kindling our love for you, sparking our imaginations, and making us burn with a desire to do your work in this world. Amen.

The Story: Baruch 5:1-9

Ask a child to read the passage, or ask each child to read a sentence. After a moment of silence, invite them to name a word or a phrase or an image from the text that stood out to them. Pause, then read the entire passage aloud again.

You don’t need to wear your sadness like a jacket anymore, Jerusalem. Put on the beauty of God’s glory instead and wear it forever. God will give you a robe of righteousness to wear. And a tiara glowing with God’s goodness will be put on top of your head. God will show your beauty to everyone under the sun. And God will give you a new name, “Righteous Peace, Godly Glory.” Stand up tall, Jerusalem. If you look to the east you will see all your children gathered because God called them together. They will rejoice because God has remembered them. Their enemies had taken them away, but God will bring them back to you as he promised like kings carried in glory on their royal thrones.

God has ordered all the highest mountains to be lowered. And the valleys will be filled up to ground level. That way, Israel can walk back safely to where she belongs. The forests will provide shade for her at God's command. And God will be leading the parade back to Jerusalem with the light of his goodness that makes him glow from the inside.

Reflection Questions:

- In the time of Baruch, who was the scribe of the prophet Jeremiah, people wore sackcloth and ashes when they were in mourning. How would someone dress today to suggest grief or sadness? What would you wear to express joy?
- Jerusalem is God's holy city and Israel is the home of God's people. Baruch says that "God will be leading the parade back to Jerusalem with the light of his goodness that makes him glow from the inside."
- I wonder what that parade would look like? What would it sound like? How would it feel to be there?

Activity: We are making lanterns that will glow with God's goodness! Invite the children to color their Mason jars with the Sharpies in small blocks of color. Use the metallic gold or silver Sharpies for accents. Wire handles may be made so the jars can be carried as lanterns. A sample of what the lantern will look like can be found here:
<http://happyhooligans.ca/stained-glass-with-sharpie-markers-and-a-jar/>

Getting Closure: We dream, like God's people have dreamed through the ages, about the time at the end of time when Jesus come again, when God will be all in all. The Greek word for this time is the Parousia. Until then, we can imagine how God's goodness will glow throughout the world when these lanterns are lit. (Remind the children that ONLY ADULTS CAN LIGHT CANDLES.)

Closing Prayer: God of love, you sent your prophets to show us the way of truth. As we prepare for the coming of Jesus, teach us to follow him so that we can be a part of bringing your kingdom of justice and goodness to earth. Amen.

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